



Department of Justice

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THREE CHARGED IN AREA PHARMACY BREAK-INS

COLUMBUS – A federal grand jury here today indicted three Columbus-area residents for allegedly breaking into five pharmacies in the Columbus area earlier this year and stealing prescription drugs in order to re-sell them.

Gregory G. Lockhart, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Ohio, Robert L. Corso, Special Agent in Charge, Drug Enforcement Administration, and Columbus Police Chief James G. Jackson announced the indictment returned today.

Charged are

Larry J. Utley, II, age 38, of Reynoldsburg,
Eric M. Hutson, age 22, of Columbus,
and Sherika Moore, age 26, of Reynoldsburg,

The indictment alleges that the three conspired to commit the break-ins committed by Utley and Hutson. Utley and Hutson are further charged with five counts of burglary of a business registered with the DEA, two counts of possession with intent to distribute controlled substances. The indictment also calls for forfeiture of the vehicle used to commit the robberies, and \$28,320 in cash as proceeds of the burglaries.

Columbus Police officers arrested the three on February 22, 2008 after two of the burglaries occurred. The Walgreen's store located at 4724 N. High Street, Columbus, Ohio, was burglarized around 3 a.m. Surveillance video showed two suspects prying the front door, forcing the pharmacy door open, prying open the cabinets containing the drugs, then forcing the rear storage door and leaving through the rear fire exit within three minutes.

Around 4:30 a.m. that same day, a witness saw two men breaking into a Walgreens at 5555 New Albany Road, E. in New Albany while a third individual waited in an SUV. The witness gave Columbus Police the license number of the SUV. Later that morning, Columbus Police officers stopped the SUV and found a trash bag in the rear compartment along with a blue crow bar and large screwdriver.

Columbus police recovered a total of 31,617 dosage units of controlled substances from the SUV and the residence where Utley lived. The estimated street value of the drugs is at least \$300,000.

The drugs recovered included fentanyl, hydromorphone, methadone, morphine, oxymorphone, oxycodone, methylphenidate, hydrocodone, and codeine.

Conspiracy to illegally distribute controlled substances is punishable by a prison sentence of 10 years to life. Possession with intent to distribute controlled substances and committing a

burglary involving controlled substances from a DEA registrant are each punishable by up to 20 years imprisonment.

Lockhart commended the joint investigation by Columbus Police and the DEA Diversion Section, along with Assistant U.S. Attorney Tim Prichard, who is prosecuting the case.

An indictment is merely an accusation. All defendants are presumed innocent until and unless convicted in court.

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